Marc Newson
GAGOSIAN GALLERY

In the machine age, designers turned to the most advanced technologies of travel as sources of inspiration. Le Corbusier wrote odes to ocean liners and airplanes. Charlotte Perriand fell into raptures over automobiles. Marcel Breuer fashioned his tubular steel chairs after the handlebars of an Adler bicycle. Today, the current of influence may flow both ways: Design might influence transportation technology, too. Or so Australia-born, London-based designer Marc Newson's second solo show at Gagosian seems to suggest. "Transport" presents Newson's designs and prototypes for, primarily, private locomotion: a nickel surfboard with a mirror finish; a nonfunctional, lepidopteran
Hannah Arendt, writing on the 1957 launch of Sputnik, scrutinized a newcomer's awe at this "step toward escape from men's imprisonment to the earth." This desire to break with earthly bounds, she observed, was consistent with a technological fantasy of a "rebellion against human existence," and the construction of a world entirely by human hands. Viewed in this context, Neuwirth's infatuation with transport reveals its true aim: escape into an artificial world, the total aestheticization of experience that is the desire of design.

—Michael Wang